

Filed for intro on 02/28/2000

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 637
By Person

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Ms. Viola Batts for her many valuable contributions to the children of Memphis through her association with Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly should honor those individuals who through their natural talents and unflagging commitment have achieved excellence in their personal endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Viola Batts is one such outstanding individual, who distinguishes herself by volunteering at the Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County as hostess, guardian, and auxiliary probation officer; and

WHEREAS, born in Memphis on September 9, 1925, Viola Batts has often taken children in need of emergency placement into her home; and

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WHEREAS, the creativity and patience with which she interacts with children is magical, and heart warming to all who witness their relationships; and

WHEREAS, this astonishing role model often provides and delivers food to needy children and families; and

WHEREAS, the originality and quality of her personality endears her to all who have the privilege of knowing her; and

WHEREAS, demonstrative of her prowess and inner drive as a public servant, Viola Batts has received numerous awards and accolades for her talents, including her receipt of *McCall Magazine's* "Angel of Change" award in 1995 for outstanding service to children and families; in 1994, she received the "Make a Difference Award" from Mayor Herenton, and spent the \$1,000 prize money on needy families; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Batts has also received the Humanitarian Award from the Tennessee Juvenile Court Services Association; and

WHEREAS, she serves as a guardian for children in Juvenile Court, and in her role as hostess, provides hands-on care to literally hundreds of children and infants while their parents are involved in court proceedings.

WHEREAS, Viola Batts has also devoted herself to a number of worthy activities in her community; she organizes trips for neighborhood children and needy children to visit, the Fair, and many other community-sponsored events; and

WHEREAS, Viola Batts remembers the following as character-building experiences: taking her lunch and sharing it with people who did not have a lunch, and being disciplined by her mother when she loaned one of her three pairs of socks to girls who had none; and

WHEREAS, through Viola Batts' untiring commitment of time and talent, she has achieved extraordinary success in her many activities as a public servant; and

WHEREAS, her noteworthy achievements are a great source of pride for her daughters: Ora Batts Russell and her two children, and Darlene Batts Lewis, and Mrs. Batts' granddaughter, Juli, both of whom live with her; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Batts met her husband, the Reverend James A. Batts on a blind date; he later made her quit her job as a nursing supervisor of a 40-nurse ward in Chicago because, typical of her heart and humanity, she became too upset when she lost a patient; and

WHEREAS, Viola Batts' dedication to children and the underserved citizens of Shelby County clearly merits the respect, admiration and commendation of this legislative body; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby honor Mrs. Viola Batts upon her many valuable contributions to the health and welfare of children as the Juvenile Court of Memphis and Shelby County Hostess, and as a volunteer with the Juvenile Court.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.